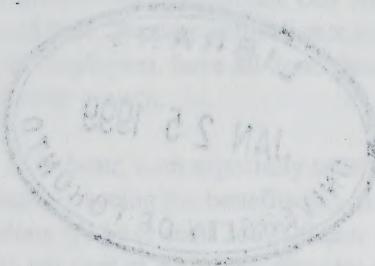


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MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

Since 1993 our government has moved forward to plan, coordinate, and lead the development of Ontario's labour market. Our efforts in labour markets have been about economic growth, employment, and job creation. This plan is making a difference.

Our efforts have been to make the Ontario labour market the best it can be. Our focus is on creating opportunities for people to work and live in Ontario. Our efforts in labour markets have been about economic growth, employment, and job creation. This plan is making a difference.



MINISTRY OF LABOUR

Over the last five years, steps have been made to improve working conditions and by introducing new legislation, we have given workers more rights and protections they didn't previously have or have been denied. These improvements of Ontario's workplace have been in the areas of wages, hours of work, employment protection, and health and safety.

1998-1999 Business Plan

The following pages describe the Ministry's priorities for the year ahead, and include a section describing our objectives.

A priority will be placing a community and education based health and safety program on youth.

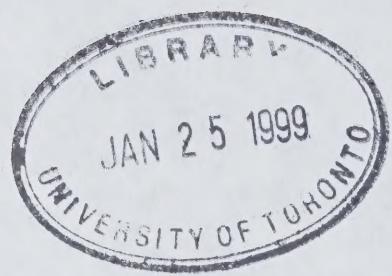
Increasing the minimum of 75 per cent of all workers' pay rates to 100 per cent by 2000.

Ensuring improvements to labour legislation, including an increase in compensation benefits, in order to assist employers and employees in dealing with workplace injuries and protecting consumers within our largely regulated public inquiries.

With your support, I am confident we can continue to move forward together. I am especially grateful to you for your support of Ontario's labour market. The respects you have for our



Ontario



MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER



Hon. Jim Flaherty

Since 1995 this government has carried forward a plan aimed at creating a positive environment for economic growth, investment and job creation. That plan is working.

Our plan has included a shift in the way the Ministry of Labour meets the needs of Ontario's employers and employees. Our efforts to restore balance to labour relations, cut red tape, increase self-reliance in the workplace and provide enhanced protection to employees, have all done their part to create this positive environment for economic growth.

As Minister of Labour, I am especially satisfied to know that everyone in Ontario's workplaces is seeing the benefits of a better economic climate.

Between February, 1997 and February, 1998 alone we have seen 265,000 new private-sector jobs created. There is greater stability in the workplace — 95 per cent of all labour disputes are being settled without a strike or lockout. As well there has been a continuing improvement in making our workplaces among the safest in the world, with a lost-time injury rate that continues to drop by an average of six per cent each year.

Even as we have shown leadership, both in economic management and by introducing workplace reforms, we have also listened to what large and small businesses, employees and communities have been saying. People from a variety of Ontario's workplaces have told us that a stable labour relations climate, coupled with a safe, healthy working environment, results in a productive, competitive workplace.

As we move into the next phase of our mandate, implementing many of the changes that we have proposed since 1995, we want to take action on what you have told us by:

- making 50,000 field visits to enforce workplace health and safety standards, and assist firms in becoming more self-reliant;
- expanding our efforts in promoting community and education based health and safety programs for youth;
- maintaining the settlement of 95 per cent of all labour disputes without a strike or lockout;
- seeking amendments to labour legislation, particularly as it affects the construction industry, in order to attract investment and create job opportunities; and,
- improving customer service via a timely response to general public inquiries.

Good planning makes for good management. As we continue to move forward together, I am confident that this business plan will allow all Ontarians to take advantage of the economic opportunities that are now before us.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Flaherty".

The Honourable Jim Flaherty
Minister of Labour

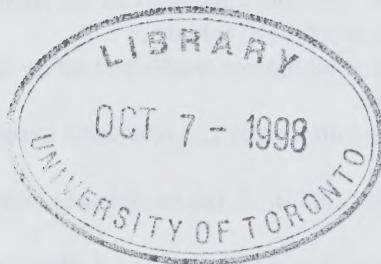
MINISTRY VISION

Our vision is a province which encourages new investment, jobs and prosperity and which has labour laws and regulations designed to seize the opportunities of the global economy and workplaces of the 21st century.

To realize this vision, the ministry is developing and implementing reforms to all major labour legislation to create a more flexible and responsive legal and regulatory framework. This will enable us to create an environment that makes Ontario workplaces among the safest in the world, where people are treated fairly and where employers and employees work together productively.

Safe, fair and harmonious workplaces are essential to the social and economic well-being of the people of Ontario.

We believe such conditions will be achieved when employers, employees and unions work co-operatively on their own initiative to meet or exceed a minimum level of well-enforced employment and health and safety standards. Ontario's labour laws must encourage and strengthen this kind of self-reliance.



ANNUAL REPORT ON KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND COMMITMENTS

1997-98 Achievements

Occupational Health and Safety

The ministry progressed quickly towards its goal of making Ontario's workplaces among the safest in the world. Health and safety inspections have increased by 63 per cent over the past two years. The ministry worked with the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board and other partners to prepare *Preventing Illness and Injury - A Better Health and Safety System for Ontario Workplaces*, an important injury prevention strategy paper which was released in January, 1998. As well, for the past two years we have exceeded our target to reduce the lost-time injury rate by six per cent each year, and are well on our way to meeting our 30 per cent reduction target in 2000-01.

Bill 99, the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act*, became law on January 1, 1998. This Act re-directed the mandate of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board — formerly the Workers' Compensation Board — to include the prevention of workplace injury and disease.

During 1997 the ministry carried out extensive formal consultations with businesses, employees and various other stakeholders about modernizing Ontario's occupational health and safety system. In Toronto alone, the ministry had 45 meetings with major organizations and umbrella groups that represent employers or unions; the ministry also held roundtable discussions with approximately 40 groups in nine other Ontario cities. These discussions represented an opportunity for hundreds of employers and employees, and especially small business owners, to inform the Ministry's decision making.

Employment Rights and Responsibilities

Ministry of Labour and Pay Equity Commission investigators want to give fair, effective and prompt service to our customers. With that goal in mind, 77 per cent of all employment standards investigations are being resolved on average within 90 days. The employment standards case backlog was also reduced by 55 per cent to 941 cases.

The ministry also moved to divest its collection activities, and to focus on inspections that help gauge the rate of compliance with the *Employment Standards Act* and *Pay Equity Act*.

Labour Relations

Ontario's workplaces — and the entire provincial economy — have benefited from effective mediation and arbitration of disputes. In 1997-98, 95 per cent of all disputes were settled without a strike or lockout.

The *Public Sector Transition Stability Act* was proclaimed in October, 1997. This Act is based on the fact that employers, employees and unions can best find satisfactory solutions to the unique labour relations issues in their workplaces. This legislation also promotes both fair treatment for employees and a smooth transition to improved public services, without interruption to service delivery. The process is now underway, and the ministry has put in place the necessary support mechanisms and infrastructure to support the parties in their deliberations.

1998-99 Commitments

Occupational Health and Safety

The Ministry of Labour will continue to set, communicate and enforce health and safety standards. We will provide motivation and support to encourage all Ontario workplaces to take responsibility for creating and maintaining a safe, productive workplace. Specifically, we will highlight the achievements of those high-performance, self-reliant firms which have outstanding occupational health and safety records, and ask leaders of those firms to become mentors to other businesses. We will also continue to enforce standards by focusing on workplaces and industrial sectors that are poor health and safety performers. To ensure a significant presence, the ministry will conduct 50,000 field visits, concentrating on workplaces that may need assistance to become self-reliant.

The ministry will continue to work to lower the on-the-job, lost-time injury rate, aiming for a 30 per cent reduction by 2000-01. We have also embarked on an injury prevention strategy that will help achieve our goal of making Ontario workplaces the safest in the world.

The ministry continues to work with the new Workplace Safety and Insurance Board to share information, identify appropriate roles and responsibilities, and develop standards for the way in which services are delivered. These efforts will continue to focus on how Ontario's workplace insurance system can prevent workplace injuries.

We have learned a great deal from our formal consultations on modernizing the occupational health and safety system, and will work to implement reforms that emphasize and encourage the prevention of workplace illness and injury.

Employment Rights and Responsibilities

In the coming year the ministry will conduct 1000 proactive inspections focused on specific industrial sectors. As well as contributing to fairness in the workplace, these inspections will help the ministry meet its target of developing base line data for measurement of compliance with the *Employment Standards Act*. As well, some 150 proactive investigations will be undertaken to monitor the rate of compliance with the *Pay Equity Act*.

The ministry will continue to provide faster and more accessible service to resolve claims submitted to the ministry. We will work to conclude 70 per cent of employment standards investigations on average within 80 days. The ministry will work to further reduce the backlog of cases by 25 per cent to approximately 700, with the ultimate target of eliminating backlogs.

As well, in order to better respond to public inquiries, the ministry has begun the process of acquiring call centre services to improve customer service.

Labour Relations

In the coming year the ministry will continue to focus its mediation and conciliation efforts to ensure that 95 per cent of all disputes are settled without a strike or lockout.

As the April 23, 1998 Speech from the Throne stated, the ministry will also ask MPPs to consider amendments to labour legislation, particularly as it affects the construction industry, in order to attract investment and create job opportunities.

The ministry, through implementation of the *Public Sector Transition Stability Act, 1997* and the *Education Quality Improvement Act, 1997* will be working with the broader public sector, other ministries, stakeholders and the Ontario Labour Relations Board to support a smooth transition in the public sector collective bargaining environment resulting from the implementation of the Local Services Realignment recommendations and the amalgamation of Ontario's boards of education.

In this regard, one of the goals of the ministry's core labour relations activity will be to resolve, or refer to mediation, 80 per cent of all disputes involving the *Public Sector Transition Stability Act, 1997* within 30 days of application.

Occupational Health and Safety

This section will focus on efforts by businesses, workers and other stakeholders with respect to the ministry's role in the development and promotion of health and safety activities.

The ministry's *Reducing Risks and Injury - A Better Health and Safety System for Ontario* framework will move towards a more effective health and safety system. This system will provide support to organizations to improve their performance and implement change.

The ministry will continue to develop workplace safety and health-based guidance, information, resources, tools and methodologies, and training standards for the day-to-day activities of workers and employers. These efforts will contribute to take up from Ontario's workplace health and safety framework right now and into the future.

The ministry will continue to work with other government ministries such as the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Ministry of Transportation, Parks and Recreation, Ministry of Energy and Mines, and the Ministry of Infrastructure to promote health and safety principles and practices throughout Ontario.

The ministry will continue to work with the labour and employer community, particularly the Young Workers Task Force, to develop the appropriate tools and resources to assist them in addressing the unique needs of young workers. The ministry will also continue to work with the Ontario Labour Relations Board to provide information and support to young workers regarding their employment conditions.

CORE BUSINESSES

Three core businesses fulfil the mission of the Ministry of Labour. They are:

Occupational Health and Safety — the setting, communicating and enforcement of occupational health and safety laws and regulations intended to reduce or eliminate workplace injury or illness. This covers occupational health and safety in the construction, mining and industrial sectors. Investment is drawn to a business climate that features employers and employees working effectively to keep their workplaces healthy, safe and productive. Therefore, our goal is to create an environment that makes Ontario workplaces among the safest in the world.

Employment Rights and Responsibilities — the establishment and promotion of fair employment standards which ensure the protection of employees in greatest need. This core business is delivered by the Employment Standards Program of the ministry, as well as the Pay Equity Commission. Fair, flexible and enforceable employment standards help to create a globally competitive workplace environment.

Labour Relations — the promotion and maintenance of balanced, stable and harmonious labour relations while encouraging greater self-reliance in the workplace. The Ontario Labour Relations Board and Labour Management Services of the ministry deliver this core business. A positive labour relations environment is one that promotes self-reliance through negotiations, which in turn attracts investment and jobs.

KEY STRATEGIES

The Ministry of Labour's goal is to ensure safe, fair and harmonious workplaces.

Achieving this while still remaining responsive to the rapidly changing workplace environment will require the ministry to deliver programs and services in ways that are innovative and efficient.

Accordingly, the ministry's key strategic commitments are to:

- focus the Ministry of Labour's role on setting, communicating and enforcing fair and reasonable workplace standards while encouraging greater self-reliance in achieving these standards in the workplace;
- establish fair workplace standards that are flexible enough to respond to the demands of the new global economy, and which encourage new investment and job creation;
- remain firmly committed to a strong enforcement program, aimed at helping those employees in greatest need; and,
- improve service to the ministry's customers.

Occupational Health and Safety

The comments and suggestions offered by businesses, workers and other stakeholders will inform the ministry's efforts to reform the province's occupational health and safety system.

The study paper *Preventing Illness and Injury — A Better Health and Safety System for Ontario Workplaces* provides the foundation for a more effective health and safety system. This system will provide support to workplaces so they can improve their performance and become self-reliant.

The ministry will continue to work with the new Workplace Safety and Insurance Board to share information, identify appropriate roles and responsibilities and develop standards for the way in which services are delivered. These efforts will continue to focus on how Ontario's workplace health and safety system can prevent workplace injuries.

The ministry will continue research into how Ontario compares with other provinces on matters such as lost-time injury experience. Currently, Ontario can boast the lowest lost-time injury rate when compared with other provinces.

Partnership programs will help the ministry meet its health and safety goals, particularly the *Young Worker Awareness Program*, and the ministry's work with the Safe Communities Foundation. Safe Workplace Associations, also have a large role to play in Ontario's occupational health and safety system. These sector-based organizations are funded through the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board and provide information and training to workplaces to assist in preventing injury and illness.

The *Safe Workplaces, Sound Business* mentoring program is also an important partnership program. This business-to-business partnership recruits senior executives of companies with a demonstrated commitment to excellence in occupational safety. These executives then act as mentors to other businesses, especially smaller businesses that might need help in creating a culture of occupational safety excellence within their workplaces.

Employment Rights and Responsibilities

The ministry continues to follow a proactive, preventative approach that includes client education and workplace inspections. These proactive activities will continue to foster a working environment characterized by fair working conditions.

The Ministry of Labour is committed to promoting, investigating and enforcing employment standards to ensure fairness in the workplace. As well, in order to better respond to public inquiries the ministry has begun the process of acquiring call centre services to improve customer service.

Labour Relations

Employers, employees and investors are interested in the relative stability and maturity of Ontario's labour relations environment, especially as a measure of Ontario's opportunities for jobs, investment and economic growth.

The Ministry of Labour will focus its mediation and conciliation services on those labour disputes in which the public interest is greatest. This includes disputes in the education, health care and municipal sectors.

KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

CORE BUSINESS: Occupational Health and Safety			
Goals/Outcomes	Measures	Targets/Standards	98-99 Commitments
An environment that makes Ontario workplaces among the safest in the world, where employers and employees effectively prevent injury and illness	Rate of lost-time injuries resulting from workplace accidents	An average 6% yearly reduction in the rate of lost-time injuries, as part of an overall reduction target of 30% by 2000-01	Continued decline in the lost-time injury rate in 1998-99 to achieve the 30% reduction target by 2000-01

CORE BUSINESS: Employment Rights and Responsibilities			
Goals/Outcomes	Measures	Targets/Standards	98-99 Commitments
Fair pay and working conditions	Rate of compliance with the <i>Employment Standards Act</i> and the <i>Pay Equity Act</i>	Base-line data for measurement of compliance levels by the end of 1998-99	1000 proactive, focused employment standards inspections, and 150 pay equity investigations, from which base-line compliance levels and standards will be developed
Effective and accessible service to resolve claims	Turn-around time for completed investigations	Conclude 70% of <i>Employment Standards Act</i> cases within 60 days Eliminate backlog	Conclude 70% of cases on average within 80 days Reduce backlog by 25% to 700 cases in 1998-99

CORE BUSINESS: Labour Relations			
Goals/Outcomes	Measures	Targets/Standards	98-99 Commitments
A harmonious and stable labour relations environment	Settlements of disputes without strike or lockout	95% settlement of all disputes without strike or lockout	Maintaining the 95% settlement of all disputes without strike or lockout

1997-98 MINISTRY SPENDING BY CORE BUSINESS — INTERIM ACTUALS*

Ministry of Labour

Operating

\$114 Million
1,265 staff

Occupational Health & Safety

Operating

\$39 Million
651 staff

Employment Rights & Responsibilities

Operating

\$38 Million
258 staff

Occupational Health & Safety Labour Policy
Occupational Health & Safety Operations
Mine Rescue Training
Workers' Compensation Advisory Program

Employment Rights & Responsibilities Labour
Policy
Employment Standards
Pay Equity

Labour Relations

Operating

\$18 Million
203 staff

Labour Relations Policy
Labour Management Services
Ontario Labour Relations Board
Public Service Appeal Boards

Ministry Administration

Operating

\$19 Million
153 staff

Minister/Parliamentary Assistant & Deputy
Minister's Offices
Internal Administration
Regional Administration

Note: Staff numbers are shown as full-time equivalents working as of March 31, 1998, and do not include leaves of absence and vacancies. The ministry is currently recruiting for Occupational Health and Safety Officers and funded positions for Broader Public Sector Restructuring.

*PSSAB based

1998-99 MINISTRY APPROVED ALLOCATIONS BY CORE BUSINESS — PLAN*

Ministry of Labour

Operating	\$111 Million 1,385 staff
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Occupational Health & Safety

Operating	\$39 Million 693 staff
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Occupational Health & Safety Labour Policy
Occupational Health & Safety Operations
Mine Rescue Training
Workers' Compensation Advisory Program

Employment Rights & Responsibilities

Operating	\$30 Million 268 staff
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Employment Rights & Responsibilities Labour
Policy
Employment Standards
Pay Equity

Labour Relations

Operating	\$22 Million 257 staff
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Labour Relations Policy
Labour Management Services
Ontario Labour Relations Board
Public Service Appeal Boards

Ministry Administration

Operating	\$20 Million 167 staff
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Minister/Parliamentary Assistant & Deputy
Minister's Offices
Internal Administration
Regional Administration

Note: Staff numbers are shown as full-time equivalents.

*PSSAB based

WHO TO CALL

We welcome your questions or comments about the Ministry of Labour's business plan. For more information, call:

Belinda Sutton
Communications and Marketing Branch
(416) 326-7403

John Armstrong
Special Assistant, Communications
Office of the Minister of Labour
(416) 326-7703

The Ministry of Labour's web site address is:

<http://www.gov.on.ca/LAB/main.htm>

Extensive information can also be faxed to you via the Ministry of Labour's fax-on-demand system:
(416) 326-6546

WHO TO CALL

For more information on Ontario's health care system, contact:

Health Care Information Network

Health Care Information Network
1-800-268-7095

Health Care Information Network

Health Care Information Network
1-800-268-7095

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